

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. A compensated nut for a stringed instrument, the stringed instrument having one or more strings, a body and a neck, the nut comprising:
an elongated body having a length sufficient to extend across at least a portion of the neck of the stringed instrument;
one or more intonation portions on the front side of the elongated body, the intonation portions having different dimensions according to the desired pitch compensation for each string.
2. The compensated nut of Claim 1, wherein the number of intonation portions are equal to the number of strings of the instrument.
3. The compensated nut of Claim 1, further including one or more slots extending along at least a portion of a top side of the nut, each of the slots configured to receive one of the strings of the instrument.
4. The compensated nut of Claim 3, wherein each of the slots is aligned with one of the intonation portions.
5. The compensated nut of Claim 1, wherein the intonation portions are cut-out sections which have a depth between about .001 inches and about .150 inches.
6. The compensated nut of Claim 1, wherein the intonation portions are cut-out sections which include a first side wall and a second side wall located in the front side of the elongated body of the compensated nut.
7. The compensated nut of Claim 6, wherein the side walls are generally parallel and the side walls are joined by a lower surface.
8. The compensated nut of Claim 6, wherein the side walls are between about .010 inches and about .200 inches in length.
9. The compensated nut of Claim 6, wherein the side walls are generally the same length and the side walls are joined by a curved lower surface.
10. The compensated nut of Claim 1, wherein the intonation portions include an opening in the top surface of the nut.
11. The compensated nut of Claim 1, wherein the intonation portions comprise a plurality of outwardly extending projections.
12. A guitar, comprising:

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a body;

a neck connected to the body;

a bridge connected to the body;

a compensated nut connected to the neck, the compensated nut including an elongated body with a length sufficient to extend across at least a portion of the neck of the guitar, the elongated body having a plurality of intonation portions with different dimensions according to the desired pitch of the stringed instrument;

a plurality of strings passing over the bridge and the nut; and

a tuning key attached to each string, the tuning keys adapted and configured to adjust the tension in the plurality of strings.

13. The guitar of Claim 12, wherein the compensated nut has a front side, a back side, a top side, and a bottom side, and wherein the intonation portions are located at least partially on the front side of the elongated body.

14. The guitar of Claim 12, wherein the number of intonation portions in the compensated nut is equal to the number of strings of the guitar.

15. The guitar of Claim 12, wherein the intonation portions comprise a plurality of cut-out sections.

16. A lute-type instrument, comprising:

a body including a bridge;

a neck attached to the body;

a compensated nut connected to the neck, the nut having a front side and a bottom side, the nut including one or more cut-out sections on the front side; and

a plurality of strings extending from the bridge to the nut.

17. The lute-type instrument of Claim 16, wherein the bottom side of the nut contacts the neck of the instrument and the front side of the nut faces the body of the instrument.

18. The lute-type instrument of Claim 16, wherein the cut-out sections have different dimensions according to the desired pitch of the instrument.

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19. The lute-type instrument of Claim 16, wherein the number of cut-out sections in the nut is equal to the number of strings of the instrument.

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20. A method of tuning an instrument with a plurality of strings, the instrument including a body, a neck and a bridge, comprising:

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mounting a nut to the neck of the instrument, the nut including an elongated body with a front side, a back side, a top side, and a bottom side, the body having a length sufficient to extend across at least a portion of the neck of the stringed instrument, the nut including one or more intonation portions on the front side of the elongated body, the intonation portions having different dimensions according to the desired pitch of the stringed instrument;

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extending the strings from the bridge to the nut; and

attaching the strings to the bridge and the neck of the instrument.

21. A nut for a stringed instrument, comprising:

an elongated body;

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a plurality of slots on a surface of the body; and

means for compensating the intonation of one or more strings of the instrument.

22. A nut for a stringed instrument, comprising:

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a substantially unitary elongated body, the body having a length sufficient to extend across at least a portion of the neck of the stringed instrument;

a plurality of slots across the elongated body configured to position corresponding strings;

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a plurality of string termination points along said elongated body, each termination point corresponding to one of said plurality of slots, at least one of said string termination points offset in distance from another of said termination points with respect to a line perpendicular to said strings.

23. The nut of Claim 22, wherein at least three of said plurality of string termination points are offset from each other with respect to said line.

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24. The nut of Claim 23, wherein said offset is non-linear from termination point to termination point.

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25. A compensated zero fret for a stringed instrument, the stringed instrument having one or more strings, a body and a neck, the zero fret comprising:

an elongated body having a length sufficient to extend across at least a portion of the neck of the stringed instrument;

one or more intonation portions on the front side of the elongated body, the intonation portions having different dimensions according to the desired pitch compensation for each string.

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26. The compensated zero fret of Claim 25, wherein the number of intonation portions are equal to the number of strings of the instrument.

27. The compensated zero fret of Claim 25, further including one or more slots extending along at least a portion of a top side of the nut, each of the slots configured to receive one of the strings of the instrument.

28. The compensated zero fret of Claim 27, wherein each of the slots is aligned with one of the intonation portions.

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